

# **Public Involvement Summary**

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**Proposed Improvements to the I-44 Corridor  
Union Avenue to the Arkansas River  
Work Package 1  
Tulsa County, JP 33788(04)**

Prepared by:



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Garver Project No.: 18037230

**Open House Date: January 30, 2020**

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## 1.0 Introduction

This document summarizes the public open house held for the I-44/US-75 interchange reconstruction project from Union Avenue to the Arkansas River in Tulsa County [JP 33788(04); Work Package 1]. The purpose of the public open house was to update the public on the continued transportation improvements along the I-44 corridor and present the proposed design for Work Package 1 to the public. Input was requested to further assist in the identification of critical social, economic, and environmental effects that may result from the project.

Work Package 1 is the first in a series of five construction projects to improve the I-44 corridor between I-244 and the Arkansas River, including the I-44/US-75 interchange. The remaining work packages are in design and additional public involvement will occur when plans for those projects are available. General information about future work packages was made available at the Work Package 1 Open House.

## 2.0 Public Open House

### 2.1 Open House Notification

Notice of the public open house was sent by letter to the Governor's office, elected officials (federal and state), Tulsa County Board of Commissioners, the Cities of Tulsa, Jenks, Sapulpa, and Glenpool, local school districts, churches, emergency service providers, and medical facilities in the study area. The letter provided a brief description of the purpose and need for the project, the proposed improvements, and an invitation to the public open house. The letter was accompanied by a project location map. Letters were mailed on December 30, 2019. A copy of the letter and the mailing list is included in **Appendix A**.

Notice of the public open house was also sent by letter to all property owners and utility owners in the study area (as previously defined for the I-44/US-75 interchange project during the preliminary engineering study). Letters were mailed on December 30, 2019. A copy of the letter and the mailing list is included in **Appendix B**. In addition, flyers were hand delivered to businesses and residents within and adjacent to the study area on January 20, 2020. A copy of the flyer is included in **Appendix C**.

### 2.2 Open House Information and Format

The public open house was held on January 30, 2020, from 5:30 PM-7:30 PM at the Daniel Webster High School Cafeteria, 1919 W. 40<sup>th</sup> Street, in Tulsa. One-hundred and seventy-nine (179) people signed in for the open house, including representatives from Garver, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), City of Tulsa, River Parks Authority, local media, and members of the public. A copy of the sign-in sheets is included in **Appendix D**.

The meeting was an open house format, where attendees could come and go, with no formal presentation given. ODOT and Garver staff were available for one-on-one and small group discussions. Three sets of identical display boards showing the Work Package 1 proposed construction, access changes, and temporary ramp detours during construction were available for public viewing. A project specific pamphlet and comment form were provided to the public as a handout. These handouts were available in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese. A copy of the open house handouts and display boards is included in **Appendix E**. The public comment period was open until February 13, 2020.

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### 3.0 Agency Solicitation

Initial agency solicitation letters were mailed on February 6, 2020. These letters provided a short description of the project and the purpose of improving the corridor. A project location map was enclosed, and the letter included a link to the project website where agencies could view the materials presented at the public open house. The letter requested recipients provide input by February 20, 2020. This letter was sent to resource agencies, the State Department of Education, the Alabama Quassarte Tribal Town, Cherokee Nation, Delaware Nation, Delaware Tribe, Kialegee Tribal Town, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Osage Nation, Thlopthlocco Tribal Town, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, and the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes. A copy of the agency solicitation letter and the mailing list is included in **Appendix F**.

### 4.0 Summary of Comments

#### 4.1 Agency Comments

The **Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ)** provided a response stating that while no adverse environmental impacts under DEQ jurisdiction are anticipated, there are regulatory requirements that must be considered in obtaining the permit (see **Appendix G**).

#### 4.2 Public Comments

Five (5) written comments from the public were received after the public open house. The questions and comments received after the public open house are presented below with responses in italics. Copies of the written comments are included in **Appendix G**.

##### Public Comments Received:

- Thank you for designing bicycle lanes for the new bridge on Union Avenue. It's important to extend the connectivity of the existing lanes on Union north to 41<sup>st</sup> Street. *Response: ODOT plans to include bicycle lanes on the Union Avenue bridge over I-44. North of the bridge, Union Avenue is a local street subject to improvements by the City of Tulsa.*
- Please keep in mind the Tulsa Go Plan for active transportation on other ODOT projects in Tulsa. *Response: ODOT considers the Go Plan and all approved planning documents in the implementation of its projects.*
- Work Package 3 appears to include the bridge over the Arkansas River. I (along with many others) hope this will include at a minimum a protected lane for pedestrians and bicyclists in each direction which would give users direct access to the River Parks Authority trails. The fairly new ODOT "bridge under the bridge" at I-244 near the southwest section of the IDL and the Arkansas River is great and widely used. Can we expect something similar for Work Package 3? *Response: The current plan includes rehabilitation and widening of the I-44 bridge over the Arkansas River to accommodate an additional auxiliary lane in each direction. Bicycle/pedestrian accommodations over the river are not currently part of the project. To provide safe accommodation for bicycles and pedestrians would require a separate structure and would add significant cost to the project.*

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- What is ODOT planning to do about the fact that the proposed expansion for WP 4, if widened towards the south, will obstruct storm drains? There are storm drains south of the section of I-44 proposed in WP 4. *Response: Any existing storm drains in conflict with the new section of I-44 will be relocated and/or replaced.*
- Please do not allow contractors to close the N/S Union bridge over I-44 and the W. 33<sup>rd</sup> N/S access under I-44 at the same time. The west Tulsa community needs N/S access at all times. *Response: The contractor will not be allowed to close the 33<sup>rd</sup> W. Avenue and Union Avenue bridges at the same time.*
- Please remember Sunday mornings are high traffic times. When considering low traffic times for closures, contractors overlook Sunday mornings. Tulsa is a religious community and needs free flowing traffic on Sunday mornings. *Response: Weekends generally tend to have less traffic than weekdays; however, the concern about Sunday morning closures is noted.*
- The presentation (display boards) was informative and easy to understand. Plenty of ODOT folks there to answer specific questions. Well done! *Response: Thank you for your comment.*